14: Johnston G-4.5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Loc FL11

Both sexes drink the beer which is made from grain, but the women never drink with the men. The women make the butter.

The men do not *smelt* iron, but obtain it in pig form from the Banta Kavirondo. There is even a certain prejudice against blacksmiths amongst the Ja-luo. They are called "Yothieth," and among some of the tribes constitute a separate caste called "Ureu." They *forge* spears, knives, hill-hooks, and axes, but their irons are imported from their Banta neighbours. *Shields* are made of buffalo or ox hide, and also of ambatch wood. Their spears have small heads, and shafts of tremendous length. They use *clubs*, and also long leaf-shaped swords, which they have borrowed from the Masai or Nandi. Bows and arrows are still employed, but the arrows are no longer poisoned. Poison was said to be derived from the venom of snakes, and also from certain herbs. Their musical instruments are very similar to those of the Kavirondo Banta.

Girls are betrothed at the age of seven, and go to their husbands at the age of ten or eleven, payment being made by degrees over the years elapsing between the betrothal and the marriage. The girl is taken by her unmarried girl companions to her husband's home. The father of the girl kills an ox and takes the meat, together with a quantity of sorghum porridge, to the bridegroom's house to provide a *wedding feast*. On the following day the bridegroom's brothers, and his other wives, if he has any, take the newly wedded wife back to her father's village, where there is another great feast. The bridegroom does not attend. The father of the girl next day presents his daughter with a goat, and she returns to her husband, who continues to make payments to his father-in-law. The total amount of the marriage payment may reach to six cows, or their equivalent. If the man stops paying, his wife will leave him and go back to her father's village until the payments are resumed. If within a year of the marriage the woman does not bear a child, the husband may stop his payments, but he has no claim to the return of what has been already paid, so long as his wife remains with him. If a wife dies without having borne children, the amount paid for *her* is returned, unless the husband agrees to accept one of his deceased *wife's sisters*, for whom only a small complimentary present is paid. If a woman refuses to stop with her husband, she is given to another man, and whatever this man gives for her is paid over to her first husband. If a woman has a child and is ill-treated, she may leave her husband, but must leave her child behind with the father. If the child be a boy, when he grows up and the mother gets old she generally returns to live with her son. If after a marriage has been arranged an avaricious father is loth to part with his daughter, the young man employs his friends to waylay the girl in the daytime. If, however, the girl after capture refuses to stop with her

16: Northcote C-9 (no date) 1907 FL11 Loo FL11

storm of rain broke over the valley, and next morning the complainants were back again to point out that his refusal to come in at the Swaras's summons had so frightened the rain-makers that he had sent rain next day, and to offer most hearty thanks for the white man's beneficent interference.

Though the Jaluo have good manners on the whole, some of their customs are decidedly the reverse of civilised. In common with the other Nilotic tribes of British East Africa, they draw blood from the living cattle and drink it. The custom, however, has its justification, for in many parts of Kavirondo this is the only method by which the natives can obtain salt. Also the older men are confirmed drunkards and heavy smokers, which causes them to age very quickly and probably shortens the average term of life.

Those who dwell on the shores of the great lake and of the larger rivers are expert fishermen: they catch fish with rod and line, a modern travel line, in vain, by woven grass substitutes for nets, and by spearing them with four-pronged wooden spears which they throw with extraordinary accuracy. They are also keen hunters, though of little use out shooting, and possess highly trained dogs which will run down an eland or hare or find a wounded guinea fowl hunted down by their throwing sticks.

In character they are naturally very honest, except with regard to cattle, a temptation which no East African can withstand. They are extremely jealous of any relations between their women and men of other tribes, nations or colour; but among themselves an unmarried woman who has reached the age of puberty may have as many friends, as they call them, as she likes, provided that they come from another clan; after marriage she must confine her attentions to her husband.

Perhaps their most pleasant trait is their love of fun and laughter: the feeblest joke or the slightest bit of horse-play will set them in roars of laughter. For hospitality and industry they have a well-earned name; they are, in fact, in every way most amenable when treated with a little kindness and consideration. They have a considerable knowledge of blacksmith's work, though the spears which they turn out cannot be compared with those of the Masai for fine work. With the latter tribe, however, they show a well-developed artistic sense, the designs on their shields being generally handsome and well carried out. They are also very fond of music—of a kind: they play upon an eight-stringed harp, which is mainly used to provide an accompaniment to their extempore songs, composed in the heroic or comic vein.

Speaking generally and comparatively they are a peaceful, non-aggressive folk, though the common impression that they are cowards is ridiculously wrong: in the writer's small experience of African tribes they have shown themselves better fighters than the much-lauded Swahili, and better policemen than the dreaded Masai; they are certainly more amenable to discipline and less inclined to prefer their own wisdom to that of their officers.

On the other hand they are most painfully litigious: civil cases which arose in